

MEMORANDUM

January 6, 1953

TO: Mr. Nelson G. Jackson, Director
Community Services

FROM: Ray E. Morris

SUBJ: Field Visit to Trenton, New Jersey and
Morrisville, Pa. - December 23, 1952

Purpose of Visit

1. To inspect the Trenton plant of the United States Steel Company subsidiary, American Steel and Wire Company, and to confer with its superintendent on personnel practices.
2. To confer with the Industrial Relations Director of (USS) Fairless Works in Morrisville, Bucks County, Pa., on the status of the employment situation there as the plant was beginning its first production.

Background Information

At the November 18th National Urban League - United States Steel conference at Fairless Works, Mr. C. F. Hood, now the new president of USS, made a wager with me that I would find the Negro employment situation at American Steel and Wire Company quite satisfactory. Mr. Hood is a former president of American Steel and Wire Co., and I had been in touch with both of the two USS subsidiaries in Trenton apropos my Bucks County operation. Not only Mr. Hood, but our own (NUL) Mr. Julius Thomas wanted an up-to-date review of American Steel and Wire Co.

United States Steel Company's Fairless Works was formally opened on December 11, 1952 (See my Trenton and Bucks County Field Report for December 10 and 11, 1952). At that time Mr. Kelly (in the plant superintendent's office) accepted the responsibility for arranging a conference between me and the industrial relations director of the plant. The conference was set for December 23rd at 2:00 P.M.

Problems Presented

1. To secure enough facts and see enough first-hand to be able to make an appraisal of the status of Negro employment at American Steel and Wire Company, and, at the same time, keep the door open for closer cooperation on the general objectives in my Bucks County operation.
2. To secure cooperation from the Fairless Works industrial relations officer as well as the actual facts of the present and immediate future employment situation.

Action Taken

I arrived at the American Steel and Wire Company, from New York City, at 9:00 A.M. For thirty minutes I talked with Mr. Dana Carleton, Works Superintendent; Mr. M. C. Krebs, Superintendent of Industrial Relations and Mr. Russel F. Schultz. Mr. Schultz had come from the New Haven headquarters office of the firm. At 9:30 I was escorted by these three top officials on an inspection tour of every department, section and room in the plant. Mr. Carleton described each operation in some detail, giving me a first-hand picture of cost, importance, skills and other such features of every operation. I asked many questions of each official, and was thoroughly satisfied.

After the inspection we sat down again in the Superintendent's office, where I gave my reactions and left some suggestions. I emphasized the fact that I was not there to criticize, but to learn and, of course, to offer my services to them that might be indicated in our discussion.

Important facets of the employment situation are as follows:

Total employed:	740
Salaried	63
Clerical	76
Production	600
- Negroes	73

Union: United Steelworkers of America, CIO, Local 2670.

Job classifications go up to #16 on the USA, CIO scale of 1 to 32.

Average worker is at classification #8.

Job level of Negroes:	
Paper Mill	9
Wire Mill	28
Patterning	19
Cleaning and	
Coating	3
Shipping	3
Bundling	6
Yard	1
Total	73

One Negro has a classification as high as #11. No Negroes are employed in any white collar, technical, professional or managerial capacity.

A class "A" machinist would have job classification #16 @ \$2.26 an hour. A machinist apprentice could be absorbed now - but no Negro apprentices have ever been employed.

When we returned to the Superintendent's office we were joined by Mr. Hetcalf, Eastern Division Manager, who had come from his office in New Haven, Conn. This group of officials was keenly interested in my reactions, and I was

happy to be able to heartily commend the firm for having a non-stereotyped picture of Negro employment as well as for operating so successfully in a highly competitive field.

Though the Trenton plant needs Class A machinists and would be glad to get additional experienced wire drawing machine operators, its employment needs are rather well met. Turnover is normal. Most workers stay with the firm for many years. More Negroes are in and are said to ask for work in the wire mill than in any other department. There is a pleasant absence of Negro concentration in run-of-the mill cleaning or "common labor" jobs.

However, no Negroes are in any other than the production department. I offered National Urban League aid in improvement in that direction, and it was agreed that further discussion of this might be fruitful.

It was agreed, also, that the firm would be happy to have us take pictures of Negro and white workers operating some of the huge machines there, and to give releases for such pictures to be used in our promotional work.

Fairless Works, Morrisville, Pa.

My conference at Fairless Works was with Mr. Lafferty, Superintendent Industrial Relations. High points of what could be determined through him, were as follows:

Present (12/23/52) employment:	1,800
Production workers	1,400
"Non-exempt" salary 'ees	
-non-management salaried	300
Female clerical workers	250
Negroes	"Don't know"
Now Recruiting:	
Machinists	Instrument Repairmen
Electricians	(Steelmill) Bricklayers
Mold Grinders	Apprentices - high school
	grade to pass aptitude
	test.

Mr. Lafferty said that the next spurt in hiring will be in the first quarter of 1953 when the rolling mill begin operation. Applicants are being tested every day. About six Negro girls have been tested for clerical work - "none passed". All female clerical job applicants must take the Minnesota Clerical test. Mr. Lafferty says there is difficulty in securing production workers since AFL unions in the area have higher job ratio than available through Fairless Works.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Report established through Mr. Ray Chase, formerly superintendent,

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Trenton Works, American Steel and Wire Division of United States Steel Company, was responsible for a thoroughly satisfactory conference on, and inspection of American Steel and Wire's employment situation. From my early reports on Trenton, it will be remembered that the good pattern found at American Steel and Wire is not to be found in the other United States Steel Company Trenton subsidiary, American Bridge Company. This should be kept in mind in our illustrations and counsel with top officials of the parent company.

This visit concerns only one aspect of our growing cooperation with the United States Steel Company. This is true of both conferences at American Steel and Wire Co., and at Fairless Works. I suggest that the highlights of both conferences and the inspection tour be used to point up need for greater community-industry relationship on problems of employment and housing particularly.

Towards that end I should like to urge that a conference with the President of United Steelworkers of America, CIO, be developed as soon as possible -- as discussed in the last NUL Board-Staff Bucks County Committee meeting. I propose to lay additional groundwork by work in Bucks County, specifically in housing and with the District Director of the United Steelworkers of America, CIO.

Persons Conferred with

American Steel and Wire Company
80 Hamilton Avenue
Trenton, New Jersey

Mr. Dana Carleton, Works Superintendent
Mr. M. C. Krebs, Superintendent, Industrial Relations
(New Haven, Conn.)
Mr. Metcalfe, Eastern Division Manager (New Haven, Conn.)
Mr. Russell F. Schultz, Chief Accountant

United States Steel Company
Fairless Works
Morrisville, Bucks County, Pa.

Mr. Fred B. Lafferty, Superintendent, Industrial Relations
Mr. Clifford E. Moore, Chairman
NUL-UDUP Advisory Committee
Room 237
Broad Street Bank Building
Trenton, N. J.

cc: Mr. Granger - Mr. Moss
Mr. Jackson
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Parria
Miss Tanneyhill - Mr. Finley - Mr. Pope
Dr. Banner